Ragnarok 2

HARRISON '72

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Editorial Memos

Well, after a long wait, Ragnarok 2 is here. The front cover is by Marie Severin, who's interview is elsewhere in this issue. As you can see, this is -sue is quite different than the first. I have recived much artwork, and Alan Hanley has been "recruted" to the staff You will note his spot illos, centerfold, and of course Captain Marvel. The drawing to the right is of myself, b y Jack Davis (of EC & Mad fame) who has promised to do a cover for us. As allways, we are on the lookout for articles and artwork, so if you have something you feel is worth being published send it in and we'll take a good look at it.

Since this issue is late, a few features had to be droped. Namely, the ad space given to the July& Multi cons.The Armageddon strip will probably be continued next issue. Also, Ragnarok three may have interior color. The Steve Englehart interview that had been planed for this issue has been moved to issue 3, with one interview per issue after that. We are in the process of setting up interviews with Bill Gains, N e a l Adams, and Jack Davis.

I would like to thank all the a r tists who sent in art. I tried to u s e as much as there was space for. A l s o thanks to Marie Severin for giving u s a chance to interview her, a n d doing the great cover. Well, see you n e x t issue.

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Three In One

-origin series-

by George Schwartz

Feature Comics, 32, May, 1940 was a sight of glory, as this issue boasted 3 new characters--Rusty Ryan of Boyville, The Voice, and Samar. You may not have heard of these characters---if that's so, it's a shame as they were pretty good features. Rusty Ryan ran in Feature 32 thru 135 (June, 1949) and Samar ran in Feature 32 thru 63 (December, 1942). What about The Voice? Your guess is as good as mine. He is NOT listed in the Overstreet Guide, nor the Collector's Guide. The Quality Voice was one of three that I know exsisted--the other two being 'The Voice' The Invisible Detective (Dell)and The Voice (Centaur) In this Article I'll deal briefly with Rusty and Samar and try to concentrate on the voice...

RUSTY RYAN Origin:

A small orphan from Boyville is duped into signing a $5,000 insurance policy by two crooks who then try to kill him on a bridge. The boy, Bobby, is saved from drowning by Rusty Ryan and his friend, Smiley. Rusty finds the policy in Bobby's pocket and guesses the crook's plot. He tells his story to Cappy Jenks; director of Boyville. Rusty confirms his hunch by checking the cut bridge. Going to the local newspaper, Rusty has a fake paper printed: that Bobby's muderers are still at large, but the sheriff knows who they are. Taking the fake paper, Rusty and Smiley go to the crook's hotel room where Rusty shouts an 'EXTRA'. As the crooks read the paper, Rusty sneeks into their room to find the incriminating saw. There is a scuffle, and Cappy arrives in time to trip one of the crooks

To Rusty's suprise, the story of his valor is already printed in a real 'Extra'. The format changed in latter issues, with Rusty in a sort of superhero costume acompanied by the Boyville Brigadiers. This 4 page origin of Rusty was by Paul Gustavson.

SAMAR Origin

This origin occupied 5 pages and was by Ted Cain. With the popularity of Tarzan this was Quality's way of getting into the jungle hero field. Samar was a jungle foundling (like Tarzan and the rest of the jungle heros) who was adopted by a tribe and grew to manhood living with the nomads. One day, Samar was angry that the tribe banished an old man so he joined him. They made a jungle home before malaria deprived Samar of his companion. Samar took to the wilds of the jungle. Hearing the warning shrieks of monkies, Samar took to the trees (a la Tarzan) to see what was going on. An elephant heard was stampeding toward a village. Samar dashed to warn the village, but it was too late. He saved a helpless child from a maddened elephant and in Tarzan like fasion, saved the chief's daughter (I might add that she was white). The stampede was planed by a evil trader who was after the blood ruby the chief owned. Seeing the villians, Samar makes quick work of them.

The VOICE Origin

In 1790, a ship was sunk by a typhoon in the south seas. A man, his wife and their small boy survived the storm. They drifted to a small tropical island and found only rare life giving herbs to eat. The man and his wife finally died, but the boy lived. 150 years later, a ship took an old man from the island shores. One year later, the old man is in a rooming house in America, being badgered for rent by a unkind landlady. The old man (Mr Elixir) is befriened by a young man. Mr Elixir tells the young man his story and continues by saying...

...and these herbs made it possible for me to live 'till now and my supply is almost exhausted! I have been working for months to discover their chemical properties--ordinary food is not enouge for me! If I cannot find a way to make more of this food I will die within weeks". Thinking the old man is

CONTINUED ON 6

Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Fandom

(No. 1 in a series) By Neal Pozner

Fandom: A group of comic fans that engage in many activities related to their hobby. The state of this group: Sad.

Just a minute there! Who is this telling you what condition your're in? What are my qualifications?

Well, my name is Neal Pozner. I'm somewhat of an experienced fanzine editor. having published a zine called The Wonderful World of Comix for three years. It's seventh and final issue will soon be out. I am a member of CAPA-ALPHA, one of comicdom's biggest and best amature press alliances, and am central mailer and founder of NYAPA, a new apa centered around the New York area. I've made friends of almost every type I've fan and enemies of even more. I've been collecting comics for about ten years.

Howzat for qualifications?

In any case, in this column I'll attempt to discuss current events in fandom as best I can. I've been the cause of much controversy because of my "Fandom for the Fans" program, and I'll try to defend my views here. I'll also try to make you all aware of portions of fandom that you may not be familiar with. And conversely, I hope some of you will let me know about things going on in fandom that I am unaware of. If so, I'll mention it in the column so others can know about it.

A column of this type will hopefully tend to bring us all together and make us tolerant of other viewpoints. For this reason, if I express a view that you disagree with, please let me know and give me your reson why. I'll give you a section of the followins column to express your views in a sort of roundtable. Presented with both sides of a story, people will be able to make up their minds as to which side they will take and may even cause others t o change their minds in their beliefs.

This zine is supposed to be taking the place of Joe Brancatelli's Comic Fandom Monthly, a article zine which evolved from the old discussion zines Those fanzines were very prevolent around 1967 and 1968. They no longer exist because fandom didn't want straight text. Joe realized this and he mixed his text with beautiful layout and nice art. That's what fandom wants. Text is secondary to art nowadays. And it must be PRO art. I wrote a whole article on the prozines and pro art in The Creative Adventure (50¢ from David Kasakove, 83 Irma Ave., Port Washinton, New York) in which I suggested that fans b u y a zine not only for it's pro contributors but for it's quality You see, I advocate the return of the FANzine; by and for the fans. Soon after, I recived a letter from Laurine White, a f a n in California. She said:

"You had some interesting things to say in The Creative Adventure about fan-

Three In One

nuts, the young man walks out. A week latter, the old man accidently spills a vial of chemical liquid onto a plant; making the plant shrink and turn brown. He has found his life giving herb! He tests his strengh by lifting a piano. The young man has been spying all this time and is discovered. The old man grabs him and dictates: "You are the only other man alive who knows of my discovery!..I'm 150 years old but I've found the elixir of life and I can do anything! I will secretly fight organized crime, and you will help me!! Time passes and the old man has learned ventriloquism, hypnotism, and sleight of hand. The Voice solves his first case by holding an intended robbery victim before the crooks can accomplish their plan. This issue makes for some good reading as it is a three in one issue.

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Fandom *Continued*

zines. I don't agree with everything because I really enjoy the big artzines However, I would like to see what you do with your fanzine; The Wonderful World of Comix, and would like to order a copy of #6."
With the copy of WWoC #6 that I mailed to Laurine, I defended my viewpoints; stating that I didn't object to her buying artzines if that was what she liked. What I objected to was a fan's refusal to buy a fanzine because it didn't have the "magic" pro names in the artzines. I commended her on her attempts to try other types of zines. Just today I recived a letter of comment from Laurine about that issue. She liked it very much.

This is what I advocate to all of you out there. If you buy only prozines- try a few fanzines. If you like only fanzines - pick up a prozine or two.

You never know what you've been missing

WHAT DO YOU MEAN $3 FOR AVENGERS #25?

Consumer Report series

by David Simons

Old comic stores-both the curse and the salvation of fans everywhere. Whenever, and where ever I travel, I'm always on the lookout for a likely looking prospect. Once,in 1967,I was lucky. It was a small store in Lancaster, PA, run by an old woman who was quite happy collecting five cents a book. But what books! Virtually everything from t h e mid-fifties on. With only $2.00 though. My buying was limited, but I swore I'd return.

Return I did, but four years later. this time my pockets were filled with money, and my mind with dreams. I had my doubts that the store would still be there. Much to my suprise, the store had remained, but the old lady had sold out. Now a combination headshop and comic dealer. The prices were high enough to make Rogofsky turn over in his vault

What I'm getting at it this-prices are high-too high to order by mail.Most dealers will give you a sizeable discount if you come in person. Since many fans are unable to attend conventions, or even gatherings such as Phil Seuling "Second Sunday" con. (held at the N.Y. Statler-Hilton on the second Sunday of every month) The remainder of this article will deal with some N.Y.C. dealers I know of, and my thoughts on ther and their various operations.

(1) The Victory Thrift Shop, 45-55 46th St. Woodside, N.Y. 11377-Thurs.-Fri,12-4 PM, Sat 10:30-5 PM.-The Thrift shop run by Robert Bell(recognize the name?) is first because it's the first I ever visited (3 blocks from my house)I think it's safe to assume everyone has seen his price-list, and that all agree his prices are high-very high! When asked about his rates, he stated t h a t his prices are high due to the amount he himself if forced to pay for the books. OK, I'll grant you that Bob, on FF or Spidy #1, But how do you explain $4.00@ for Conan 1-14 (prices taken from newest list available) I've found though, that the condition of his books are as stated, and that service is satisfactory. (he will bring books to the store from home for your examination)the same holds true for his Golden Age material w/prices high, but condition still very good (unless stated)As far as Bob goes, I've been dealing with for years, since he started,and continue to do so untill he stops (if he'll still let me)

(2) 441 Bargain Books, 441 Walt Whitman Road (Route 100) Huntington Station,NY 11746 Mon-Fri 10:-10:-Sat 9Am-7Pm. This is not strictly a comic shop: In fact, I feel comics are just a sideline for the owner, who can cash in on the fact that he's more of less alone on the island (as far as I know) His stock is small ("Well over 3000 comics on our tables at any one time") and many early issues are, as yet, missing (FF 1-5, Spiderman 1-3, X-Men 1&2, ect.) Condition is good, and prices are reasonable (but rising) The service could be a bit more congenial. Don't go in looking for Golden Age stuff though, As it's 'few and far between". One nice feature is is his also carrying fanzines (at a slightly marked up price) a nice place to visit.

(3) My Friend's Book Store, 1168 Flatbush Ave, Brooklyn, NY. I've only visited this store once, while visiting a fellow fan,so my knowlege of Ruby Averback's operation is limited. From what I've seen though, a few improvements could be made; his resent DC Material is jammed into wooden cases, bending, and tearing the covers and interiors. Jimmy Olsen covers could be found on World's Finest Comics. Many good buys could be found in the Marvel books.-(They were better kept) their condition was good,but I don't recall any prices. Golden Age was plentiful but badly displayed. Marvel original art was also for sale. Service was good,and Mr Averback was quite friendly. Visit if you are in the area.

(4) Adventure Bound. 6 Morton St (in Greenich Village) Manhatten,NY(formerly at 692 Bay St. Staten Island NY)Sat&Sun 12-6 PM. I haven't visited Bill Morse since his store was on Staten Island so I don't know if the change in location has lowered his prices at all. My purpose in visiting his store one Sunday was to complete an Avenger's set. After a long drive to an obscure store on Bay St., I found that his prices were a bit more than high on Marvels. $3 for Avengers #25.While his resent stuff is high the Golden Age is Quite resonable, and condition is generally good. Service is very good, Almost making up for the high prices. (caused by only operating weekends) If you're looking for Marvels call&check the prices before making the long trip. Otherwise, go and you won't be disapointed.

That finishes the list of comic stores Ive visted in NY up to this time If you have a store you have visited, and have comment about, or feel others would benifit from my visiting, write me, Dave Simons,41-41 46th Street Long Island City, NY 11104, and I'll include your information in a future column. Till then, good hunting. Peace.

*part 2 (bargain books revisited)next ish

Things To Come...

Next issue we will have a interview with Steve Englehart, and full color cover by Frank Frazetta! And back cover by eaither Brunner or Pantucchio. Which do you want first Huuuuuuuuu? If you've seen our ads you know we are haveing a Jack Davis color cover, along with a interview with him, with about 10 or more pages of never before seen Davis art! It will be our best issue yet! And in issue 5 we have color cover &interview with Jack Kirby! bet you can't wait. Well, we can't eaither.

LETTERS

Alan J Hanley

So, YOU were Mr Miracle! I saw you and burst out laughing when I heard the beep-beep of your Mother Box. That was great. And there are some who say that the Mom Box actually won it for you.Does that mean it really works? It must.

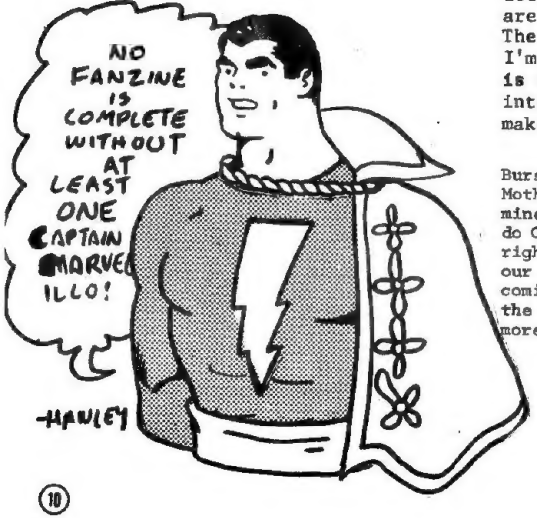
Lotta folks telling me I should be on the Captain Marvel strip - including C.C. Beck. The net effect has been truly a high boost in the old moral department. This new esteem means I can't do any more quick sloppy art. I have to make everything good.More work But really, my hopes for some thing good about to happen have never been higher.

Let's keep our fingers & eyes crossed. Get the Mother box to work on it too. I await Ragnarok with feverish anticipation: Jim

Gene Klein

Dear Mark,
At first glance, Rag. appears to be trying awfully hard to come of as a scholarly offset project, and I don't see why. Most often, fanzines that try for that kind of thing, wind up as utterly boring reading. I remember the fanzines I enjoyed reading the most, just happened to be either mimeo-ed or ditto-ed. The fanzines I enjoyed, were the ones that invariably had some sort of personality and that meant having articles be people who had something to say. What makes in interesting for me is if the writer let's us know something about his likes and dislikes, which in turn prompts comment, thus creating some sort of active lettercol. And, interesting lettercols - are the things I really enjoy reading. The format seems incredibly flexible and I'm happy for it. Your scope of appeal is so wid that almost anything can fit into the contents, and invariably, it'll make for interesting reading... :Gene

Burst out laughing, eh? (see con report) The Mother Box is a working model invention of mine. I know everyone is rooting for Jim to do Captain Marvel for DC. I know he's the right man for it. Gene, we will try to keep our format flexable, while still remaining a comic-zine. We are trying our best to get the best art & articles in fandom. We need more comments, send 'em in! :ED



HORROR comes to Archie comics ?

By Jeffrey H. Wasserman

Excluding their M.L.J., Radio Comics, and Mighty Comics series, the Archie Pub-lishing Corperation (now publishing under the name of Archie Music Corperation) is well known for their humor magazines based around the Archie family. (that's Andrews, not Bunker). Their attempts at publishing super-hero comics during the years when it was financially wise to do so are notorious for their failures. At best, each effort lasted no more than five years and then quickly faded out of existence. Each time they came to realize that this type of comic was just not up their alley, and retreated to their old stand-by: Archie. So much so in fact, that they named the company after him.

Now, however, with mysterv and horror comics coming on as strong as they were in the early fifties, Archie Comics had decided to exploit this angle. Relying upon no other talents than those they already employ in writting and drawing their Archie Series, Archie released their first horror title: Chilling Advetures in Sorcery as Told by Sabrina.*Sorcery is the word of the title that is emphasized being that it is the largest on the cover. To those of you who are asking each other who the hell Sabrina is ...Sabrina is a teen-age witch that was developed in an old Archie's Mad House comic some years back. She seems to have gained popularity as a television cartoon series was devoted to her last year . Being far more attractive and far less freightening than the three old E.C. characters, Sabrina nevertheless serves the same function they did as narrator of the stories.

What has developed out of this is a cross between the Archie Comics' style of artwork and the E.C. blend of plotting. Unfortunetly, both good scripting and proper feeling of eeriness in artistry are not represented in this Archie publication. Sorcery is, in the truest sence, a cheap imitation of the horror and mystery yarns that the major comic combines are releasing. Vampires, misshapen people and curses do not make succesful titles...appropriate writting do.

To quickly review the stories in this premiere (and hopefully, final)issue, only a study of the lead story , "Behold the Beast", is necessary as it is a good example of the magazine's contents. The beast in question is a teen-age freak (no puns intended)who can boast of having four arms. Little reason is given for his escape from the attic that kept him prisoner. None whatsoever is given for his confinement, or for the origin of his physical state.

His first appearance among the villagers brings forth shouts of dismay & blood-thirsty anger. A posse is quickly formed and the whimpering creature is persued through the forest. He hides as the searchers pass by and upon stepping out into the open, is discovered by a young girl. Thet face each other and the creature hesitates from running off again. She seems to be unafraid of him no sound when the posse return their way.

The leader of the group inquores if she has seen the monstrosity and the girl says no. The four-armed boy is touched by her act of kindness and, as a result, falls in love with her. Her later revelation that she is blind does not affect his opinion of her and he does not pause to consider what her reaction to him would be if she has sight. He is in love and has a crush on her.

They part company and all the creature remains with is the silence of the woods. Suddenly, a scream from his beloved tears the soundless night apart! Blind as she is, she has wandered into a swamp. The monster boldly rushes past the hunters who watch on helplessly as he dives in and pitches the blind girl to safty. A smole that is almost comical (due to the art work)cr

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* It would seem that Archie series is quite enthralled with useing long titles. This writter cannot forget the appearance of the Simon & Kirby Shield magazine entitled The Double Life of Private Lancelot Strong that Radio Comics put out back in 1959.

-osses his lips while he sinks into the mire that was meant for the girl. The c-rowd of onlookers dismiss the brave move as a witless, unthinking action of the monster. The girl just sobs in the background. A very touching story.

This writter would have also sobbed, had he been lifted from beneath only by the arms and then tossed to the shore like a frisbee.

What the future canhold for us if th-is new trend is followed is almost too horrible to mention. Laying aside such fears, imagine if you will, Haevey Comics coming out with a title like: Spell-binding Sagas of the Supernatural as Related by Spooky. Or Marvel's Morose M-emoirs as Mentioned by Millie the Model. Or Nationals; Jolting Legends as Told by Jerry Lewis.

Hopefully, this article will k e e p you, dear readers, on the right path and save you the twenty cents that this critic lost on Sorcery. If you do purchase it, puff out your chest...you have saved the rest of us from newsstand pol-lution.

Jeff Wasserman has contributed to these fine magazines:

Comic Fandom Monthly
Etcetera
Fantastic Fanzine
Fantastic Fanzine Special
Fantazine
The Monster Times
United Fandom Press
and, of course,
RAGNAROK

KING CON

by Tom Fagan

Bagdad in downtown Manhattan! Emerald City on Thirty Forth Street! Pleasure Island...a few steps away from Penn Station!

The con that tops them all. King Kong! One just over; another already on the drawing board---in the planning stages.

1973's New York Comic art Convention.

Con Chairman Philip Nicholas Seuling jokingly saying: "Maybe we ought to rent Central Park nexy year;' then adding seriously, "C.C. Beck will be the guest of honor at the '73 Con-vention." Charles Clarence Beck, one of the master-minds behind the original Captain Marvel, the Shazam man!

Applause at that announcement. A cheer touching off the excitement of New York Con '72. Before the old order giveth away completely to the new, return with us then to those golden days surrounding the Forth. It's July and you're with it.

You're at King Con! And every day is the Fourth of July for you and 3,400 others present. It's better than"a Saturday in the Park. Can you dig it...Yes I can...(thanks Chicago) ...a real celebration!" Here's just a few things dug; memory bank flashes:

Seuling opening the "Homecoming" relating:

"I was once asked who would collect comics anyway...a bunch of freaks, right? So I answered them truthfully. I said, 'Yes!' And I'm one of them!" Seuling setting the welcoming tone:

I intend to have a damn good time; I suggest you do the same!" And we did just that; Phil, we had a good time...one of merriment, not of damnation!

We listened to Alex Toth. He had a lot to say in his keynote address. Obviously a lover of the comic strip as a story-telling form, Toth called for betterment in "format, design, writing and art."

Said Toth, "a job well done sells itself. We need to reinstate new wnthusiam! We need to reinstill excellence!" Ovation in agreement with Toth's observation: "Mediocrity turns everyone off; an uninspired product is not good business nor good entertainment."

The Code? Ah, The Code. Again we applaued Toth's definite statement, "We Don't Need It!" We agreed that "Senseless violence is not necessary; action, yes, as long as there is real reason for it!"

Jack Kirby was called upon for comment about the future and the past of comic books. Observed Kirby:

"When things become tight (financially) we're going to become more creative. This is going to be a bonanza for the reader. There'll be variations and a revitalization of themes we have now."

Kirby said "a change" is happening. Comics are becoming a respectable art form." The Change is a gradual one similar in comparison to acceptance of water colors when once oils were considered the only respectable medium.

"Sure it was easier to work in the old days," said Kirby speaking of comic books of the past. "There were no rules then. Everything was new. We were finding ways to do new things.

"Now a format has been laid down. Our job is to sustain the interest and still maintain a burst of creation. New ideas are coming in from everywhere."

Asked if he ever had a desire to do underground comics, Kirby shook his head, no. "I think I can do a good story around

a conventional theme." The audience by it's applause demonstrated they thought Kirby's work excellent and among the best in the comic art field.

Before the question and anser period was brought to a close, Kirby was asked why so many of his characters were young people. He answered thoughfully, "I believe they have more reader appeal. The young have a harder time defending themselves in life than do adults. Therefore, stories about young have a stronger sense of the dramatic."

Both Toth and Kirby were later giest-s of honor at the largest attended luncheon program in the N.Y. Con's five year history. Each was awarded a special plaque recognizing individual inventiveness and achievement in furthering comic book art.

If you were present at any of all 5 days of the Convention, you may have memories like these:

Seuling breaking the bombshell news over afternoon TV that D.C. had acquired the rights to Captain Marvel.

Denny O'Neil commenting the humor of the original Captain Marvel tales of the 40's and early 59's will be maintained in O'Neil scripts of the 70's. "I read about about 150 of the old stories and I was absolutely charmed by them. I figure no one could improve on the concept."

Rumor later verified that C.C. Beck will be the Captain Marvel artist. The book is to be know as "Shazam Comics."

Len Wein announced as scripter of The Shadow. "We're trying to keep the character as close to the way he was done on the radio. Yes, the setting (comic book) will be the 1930's."

"Any chance 'Son of God' will come out regulary?...the question. "Yes,every Christmas; Every Easter!"...the wry anser.

Statements (your choice whether they be tongue-in-cheek or not) such as "Warner Brothers is considering doing a musical around the Justic League of America," and "'Son of God' will eventually be a hard-cover book!"

Viewing $3.000 worth of "bootleg movies" running nightly until dawn. Being told you had to be at least 12-years-old to see the Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers flick. The kids couldn't have gotten in if they tried; every seat was already taken.

Waiting four nights in a row to see "The Thief of Bagdad;" then sleeping through it.

Forsaking films to cluster around Neal Adams as he drew detailed drawings for a nominal price of any character wanted. Purchasing a Jack Kirby original. Watching Larry casually laying down fifty dollars for a penciled sketch of "The Demon."

Fletcher and Chuck backing down at the last minute on their vowed intention to ask Kirby "about the Hal Foster swipe in The Demon."

National Lampooners Michael O'Donahue and Shaun Kelly concluding their talk with,"what no bombs, no rocks, no...? ...and Scott Edelman gleefully rising to the occasion, water pistol in hand while Al Shuster screams Don't SAY that. The panel gets even by "letting him have it" with a pitcher of ice water. Scott crashes to the floor, wet, while the rest of the Ragnarok staff try to wring themselves out.

Sergio Aragones complying with a request and delighting the crowd with a "cartoon about the Con." Chalk wizardry! Within seconds Sergio had drawn a person in a phone booth,a long line, a person wearing a Superman suit.

Learning the Rutland (Vt.) Hallowe'en Parade is to be featured in three books this year, namely the JLA, The Beast and a two part Thor story.

Co-authors John Peck and Les Daniels saying they expressed their feelings about "The Code" by reprinting it entirely in their book, "The Comix." Said Peck, "That was about the only thing we could do to show how ridiculous it was!" Daniels added he thought there never should have been a Code in the first place. "If a thing's too raunchy, nobody's going to buy it!" Daniels concluded.

Watching "a geuine, real-live belly dancer." tastefully perform on stage. Yes, the Con had a little something for everybody.

The beautiful 96-page Convention program book with full color covers. Covers by the way, donated by Jim Warren and costing in the neighborhood of $1,200.

Neal Adams being named ACBA's new president; Jonny Romita, vice president; Nelson Bridwell, secretary; and Marie Severin,treasurer. Having Gerry Conway introduce you to Miss Severin and suddenly being at a loss for words.

A two-hour musical billed as "The '72 Comicon Variety Show" and directed by Ken Kraft. One -if not- the highlights of the Con but unfortunately the poorest attended event of the entire program, nevertheless, our bid is for more of the same next year and this time a crowd around to appreciate it.

The fanzine panel, chairmaned by Martin Pasko. It's preoccupation with "the new and exciting," untill reminded gently the 'limited edition press' also has a duty "to reco-

rd and preserve Comic Art's past history."

A slide show, featuring The Avengers of Marvel Comics, played to a full audience. Prepared by Barry Stitch and Evan Tobin, both of Valley Stream, N.Y., it took over a hundred man-hours to complete the final product. Voices by Stitch, Collins, Alexander, Simons & Edelman.

The ACBA "Billy Awards" that never materialized but an improptue reading and "dramatization" of a House of Mystery story, kept things from being dull. Again the irrepressible Scott Edelman "stared," this time assisted by Mark Collins, David Simons and Ed Alexander. Totaly ad lib, "the performance" was easily the funniest event of the entire con. Well...Edelman, wearing a super hero mask at 5 a.m. and telling Penn Station police he "had just come from the movies." was pretty humorous too!

The art exhibits of Jim Steranko and Mike Hinge. Those beautiful blow-ups and the irresistible Princess Pantha! Popeye art by Bud Sagendorf. Viewing the exciting work of Robert MacIntryre, a Canadian artist.

One of the best Costume Parades ever. Contestants ranged from Gwen Seuling as Daisy Mae to Marc Bilgrey as Hawkman, and Jack Harris as The Red Skull. (What!? no Edel Man???)

Tom Watkins, Jim Steranko and Denny O'Neil doing the judging.

The final decision:

Ragnarok editor Mark Collins...1st place as Mr. Miracle.

Heidi Saha as a fetching Sheena... second place winner. ("Will the real Jim Steranko, please sit down!")

And Justice finally triumphed.... Harvey Sobel placed third as Green Arrow, broken arrows and all.

Tony Isabella announcing the "1971 Comic Art Fan Awards" results. Television and radio interviews; articles in the New York Times ans the New York Daily News, all favoring the '72 Con and the idea behind it.

Talk of a Comic Art Trade show, perhaps next year. Seuling and Sol Harrison, production manager at DC., tentatively discussing the proposal.

A new tradition founded...the Ed Aprill Award to be presented annually. Tom Fagan named as the first winner.

Neal Adams giving his views about working in the Comic Art field:

"Comic Book Artist are 'art junkies. ! They go crazy one day and continue that way year after year. It doesn't matter. It's a job he feels happy working at at least 50 per cent of the time."

"If you'r a good comic book artist, you'll be making good money steady. Not big money, but steady pay all the same."

"If you like doing stories that reach millions of kids...then you should be a comic book artist. If you like drawing shirts or other commercial products and making big money doing that, then you should be that kind of artist!..." Adams concluded.

Maybe though you have different memories. Perhaps, you dug the dealers' room and the treasure trove of everything-you-always-wanted-to-own-but-never-had-the-money—to-do-so-and-still-don't, on sale there. Still it was groovy just to look, and in some cases trade for or buy outright.

Remember Dave Kaler and Bill Morse's booth had Batman No. 1 on display. The price? Outtasight, man! But no one had Detective 38 and you know; you looked. When you found out it was going for a minimum of $135.00, you shrugged and asked the price of Casper The Friendly Ghose these days. And even those are going up!

You did get an IW reprint of The Avenger, a mid-50's character drawn by Dick Ayers. However, you couldn't trade a buck Rogers ray gun for a chipped bust of James Dean, even though the gun was in perfect condition and the statuette wasn't. (Anybody reading this that has a Dean statue for trade, let me know and what you're asking for it. That's called a free plug!)

How about the woman selling the 'hard por' gas station comics' of the 30's...re-print editions, of course. Just because you wore black she thought you were a priest. When she discovered differently, she disgustedly reassembled the books. You grinned and gave her a Green Lama 'blessing' before easing on.

Buying Skull no. 4 off Lynn. Talking about Cthulhu with Dana and Tom Anderson. Blue inviting you to a Buddhism class at "New School" and you missing out on the offer. Why didn't you get that Vampirella poster when you had the chance! Picking up (and paying for portfolios of Don Newton and Robert Macintyre art.

Being annoyed every time you inquired the price of a comic and having a dealer flash a copy of the Overstreet price Guide. (Whatever happened to the bargaining

system, gentlemen? Sheeesh!) Being pleased with a hyperman button and the latest issue of the Collector from Bill Wilson.

Alan Light having the "best looking dealer's table" and receiving a prize for it...a refund of his already-paid dealer fee. Also Alan Light winning first place honors in the Comic Art Fan ballot for "Favorite Fanzine"...because of his "The Buyer's Guide." If anyone deserved it; he did! As did Richard Corben named as fandom's first "Favorite Artist." Rowlf! And "Arf!" too for good measure.

Knowing the '72 attendance figure was 1,200 more people than those attending the N.Y. Con in 1971. Also feeling a little pride the '72 Con had at least 400 people more present than those at the widely heralded Star Trek Con last January. We are still King Con.

And if that last sounds a little self-centered, it isn't. Anybody who has attend-ed a New York Con knows what I mean. There's a feeling of camaraderie and conviviality that sweeps around you making y o u feel that you belong even if it's y o u r first con.

Which is just one of the reasons we 're looking forward to being at the 1973 N e w York Comic Art Convention...

Where to paraphrase Chicago...

"Every day'll be the Fourth of July!"

Photo guide

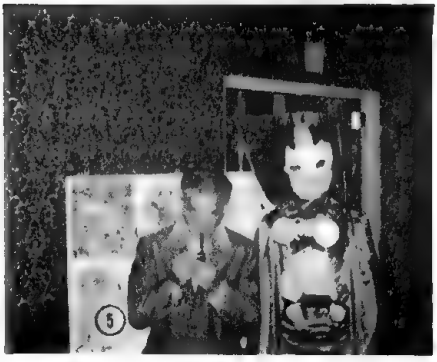
1. Phil Seuling
2. Phil & Alax Toth
3. Kirby meeting Joe Sinnott for first time
4. Roundtable interview
5. Kirby & Mr. Miracle
6. Aragones' chalk wizardry
7. The Shadow
8. Sheena
9. Doc Strange
10. Red Skull
11. Superman
12. Green Arrow
13. Mysterio
14. Sgt. Fury
15. Mr Miracle
16. Duo Damsel, Vodo Kid
17. Hawkman
18. Mr. Miracle-1st
    Sheena-3rd
    G. Arrow-2nd

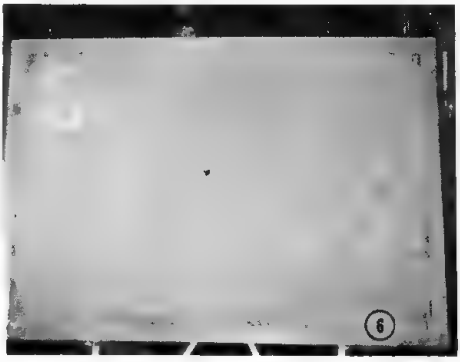
NEW YORK COMIC ART CONVENTION

ALL FIVE DAYS

STATLER-HILTON
NEW YORK CITY

JULY 1-5
1972





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Doc Strange

What If...

SUPPOSE THEY GAVE A CON AND NOBODY CAME??

By Liam O'Connor

If I were to walk up to you and say "Suppose they gave a con and nobody came?"

Any number of fans would say, "yeah, your crazy, it would never happen."

I agreed until I say behind a table at the E.C. con for the last three days and saw nobody. Also the Norfork con drew only 200.

Good friends of mine (fan) did not go to July con because there are too many cons. I agree, in NYC I have been to Creation, Star Trek, Luna(?), July Con and 12 Second Sundays. I admit I like cons but 5 days of July con really killed me. I worked at various times as a Dealer, Security, and Staff.I ran into a bunch of smart mouth brats that did not like ; having to pay, wearing their tags, getting caught for ripping off. I was asked to work security and I did so, but that does not mean that I an not a fan just like the brats, I did not deserve this type of treatment. This was a downer on the con.

Second sundays are my favorite because nobody gets lost in the crowd.Also Paul Levitz, leader of the Brooklyn Barbarians, takes a table which gives me a place to dump my coat, call home and so as not to be bored I work behind the table. The ETC. and T.C.R.-crowd staff the table so their is little work.

When 3500 people attend a con, you lose your friends + people you want to be friends with but can't because you lose them. Especially when you work as many jobs as I do. They get hassled , you get hassled. Then the pros get hassled by the usual bunch of idiots wanting autographs, sketchs, and "Gee,can you give me advise on..." If your friend wants to talk, to debate, complement, or question, say Neal Adams , on work that Neal has done on in the last year. He can't, NEAL can't, so he is unhappy for the rest of the con.

The EC con to me as a fan was good because I got to hang nobody to sell to. As a matter a fact, no dealers had anybody to sell to. A good con did I say? Yes, I met and conversed with Jim Steranko, my friends and out of town fans, In other words, I had a good time.

As a matter fact, all cons tend to be the same. To be the same I mean except for slight variations-the panels, displays and dealer's room and what is selling good at one con to the next , year after year. How many times can you listen to the panelists tell the same story over and over again, the displays and the movies seem never to vary.

Oh well, I don't mean that the con's will just disappear, but as more and more fans don't go to all the cons, do not be suprised if one day you walk in to a con and there is none. You can tell this when the Chairman cuts his throat, the dealers crying in their beer and Paul Levitz, packs up and goes home as you arrive. I TOLD YOU SO!

-HANLEY
5112

A Interview With Marie Severin
Marie
SEVERIN

Mark: First of all,how did you start in comics?
My brother let me in. (laughter)
Mark: Well, how did you get interested in drawing?

My whole family drew. My father was an artist, and my m o t h e r w a s a designer of clothes. On rainy d a y s , instead of going out and getting into trouble or something, you were provided with paper, whether it was brown wrapping paper or stationery,or line paper, or school paper, but we always liked to draw. And when somebody else in the family does draw,usually it brings it out in you, and you are encouraged also. So it's not like "What are you doing sitting in the corner all day, drawing?!" You had books to read and encouragement at home doing this, a lot of it.

Mark: Skipping ahead, what did you do at EC?

Anything I was told. (laughter) *..Well let's see. I started out, I had a job, as most teenagers do because you never have enough money. And my brother had started doing some western stuff, and and everything..And when it came to EC, Kurtzman was very interested in controling the coloring, because at that time they either did it themselvs, o r they had to send it to Chemical, and they'd do it for them. And a lot o f this stuff called for mood; it called for accuracy with uniforms. Even science fiction stuff. They wanted it a certain way: accurate and so forth. So,knowing that i was interested in art and that I had some art schooling, but especially that I knew what my brother was doing and interested in it. I started coloring for the predates (I think that was the word:ED)and they liked it. And I knew what they wanted from following their stuff. So pretty early in the game - I guess about 51 or 52, I don't even remember, I was doing that. Then I went on staff at EC and I did coloring, production,and research. You know the stuff that goes in: Little spot drawings, little things like that. They were all little things, but as you know from seeing us work here, production is the backbone of stuff, because, wow, production people make corrections and set things up, and put changes on, a n d the lettering, and the whole thing or the book would never materialize.There's a whole section of it that never gets any credit,but it has to be done. And it's even more so today with the many, many more titles that are on the stands. You have to have a strong production department working.

Mark: Would you say, basicly the horror titles are what "doomed" EC, with the code coming in and everything?

Doomed it? Well, I don't know. I think it was somebody needing a scapegoat,- just like they're doing i n films today.They've damned tlevision and everything. They can't damn the comic book, because we don't do anything. And the whole generation that has turned to dope and everything - didn't have bad comics turning them off. I don't think EC was turned "bad comics", what they called "bad comics". We never had any terrible nudity and sex stuff going on the way they intonated, but everybody was. I think the stories were so very graphic and so awfully bloody and so forth. In writing, as much as drawing , I don't think they showed that much,but hinted at it. But there was more in your imagination in the EC horror stories, which grabbed people because the stories were so well done art wise, and story wise.

Dave: The main thing is, when people associate the code with comics being put out of business they associate it with EC.

That's because EC was the only one who started to fight it. But they had to give up because they were really losing money. Bill would of, I'm sure, fought longer and harder, but for what? He had a tremendous loyalty to his staff,and he tried to keep as many people busy as possible. I mean, today the comics that were put out then are nothing compared to what's been coming out in some of the underground newspapers. I don't mean the comic stuff. It's the sex stuff and all that. I think if he had fought it...well, it's just that he was ahead of his time.

Dave: I read that if forced about 90% of the companies out of business.

It hurt a lot of innocent people. We weren't doing anything bad.If anything, their argument--which I really never though about it that much because I was never much of a comic fan when I was a kid. I liked comic books,but as soon as I discovered movie books...I was around 10 year old and I started reading movie books for all the movies. After that, I never knew what was going on in the comics, and I never collected. I should have. Oh, I should haved saved all those wonderful books, but I didn't.

Dave: Where have I heard that line before?

When I was a kid, all thes books that are selling for $100, $500, $1500 were thrown in the closet.

Dave:...or burned

That's right, in the incinerator. I think EC, if it had fought, probably still would have lost. However, Bill had reasons, which were mostly economical, and he had to take care of his people with what he could do. I mean, after all, most of it was his money but still, he had the decency not to be a complete idiot crusader. He was a crusader but he wasn't impractical:and try to drag everybody down with him. He tried to put out a line of *...but that didn't work out that well because it's been proven that color is what sells the bulk of illustrated comics. The B&W books sell to a certain degree but it's a different audience. So many sales are not to people who understand the fan aspect and what the little kid wants. It's grandma, and say, "Aunt Marie" are going to see somebody, and you go to the stands and you pull out,well not me but say an aunt of a bunch of kids. She pulls out Casper the ghost because it's a cartoon Harvey book. She might accidently pull out the Fantastic Four, and she'll spend two dolars on the comics and she'll take them over as a present to the kids. And she didn't pick out anything with discrimination. She has no idea what the kid wants, while the kid would rather she give him the two dollars---he goes out and pulls out the books,whether it be National or Marvel. There's an awful lot of sales that way, and there's a awful lot of sales with kids that don't have comics at home,and don't have the money. And if they do get a couple a bucks, they'll go out and for the first time they'll be able to make a choice. And what people discount is this may be a very big sale of a book, just because it's distributed wrong: It's available to people who don't know the difference. Like,there's a lot of people who love this new trend sword & scorcery thing, and Conan is a fantastic guy. There's kids--probably a million---who've never even heard of it If it was distributed around, kids would look at it and say "Hey, I'd like to read that!" If they don't see it on the stands, he's out of luck.So there's a lot of good stuff around that doesn't get noticed by the public. The fans are a closely knit thing,but they don't influence things that much.

Dave: Tarzan had very spotty distribution.

Yeah, and his stuff is great.Of course, I think he's a little intimidated by their wanting it to look like the early Tarzan, to tie it in, but once he get's over the background of it, and setting the pace and let Kubert free...like his Tor of years ago was much f r e e r and beautiful. Not t h a t t h i s isn't beautiful; his Tarzan is great. But I think he has to follow along and get the mood of the early Tarzan with Foster and Hogarth. And once he's over doing that stuff,he goes into "Kubert's Tarzan on the way of real great things. *..the original material and maybe this is the way the original sold. There's business reasons- it's not just holding somebody back just so the story wouldbe there. These things are thought about a great deal in all companies when they're doing something like that. They try to reason what would be the best way to do it, and my personal opinion is I'd rather see Kubert do it his way. But then the business end of it thinks *...which was Hogarth's Tarzan.Beautiful. I think it's unfortunate the guy has to follow in somebody else's footsteps,when alone he could do a superlative job on the whole thing.

Mark: with CC, was there anybody who could have actually prevented the books from coming out?

Right. You mean when the code started?

Mark: Yeah.

Well, I think it's the same way. If a book doesn't have the seal on it, most distributors in those days wouldn't put it on the stands,there was so much publicity about it. And that's t h e only way to hurt anybody: by cutting your money. You can print a million books, but if you can't get them on the stands in Wichita, forget it. Nobody is going to say you can't print it,they'll say,"sure,spend your money; send it to the printer." But the distributor says, "if you don't have that code seal on it sorry buddy".So it never saw the stands.

Dave: Even some of the code material is having trouble being distributed down south. The GL/GA stuff didn't make it in some of the states.They wouldn't even let it in.

Well see, this is another thing. It's not right in our way of thinking. In their way of thinking it is. For their own reasons, whether they're bad or unreasonable, it's not for us to say. I think it's dumb. Dave: Denny O'Neil blamed it on the Spiro Agnew issue.

Really? (laughing and showing us her Spiro Agnew watch) Spiro Agnew is just fine. I like him 'cause he talks well.

Mark: What are you doing at Marvel right now?

I'm in the state of changing my job here. They like the Kull I'm doing, and they told me I should be breaking down stories and stuff. Because I certainly, have enough training. I'd be pretty dumb after all these years, not knowing something of what I'm doing.Anyway,they want me to do more pencilling and story telling and so forth. What I have been doing the past couple years is designing most the covers in small form, a lot of production work, and I've colored all the covers. And I've colored a lot of the...not a lot of the books, but when they're in a tight bind with one of the leading books, if one of our good colorist's can't do it,like if Stan Goldberg isn't available. I can do a book for them real fast, if the book is very late and we can't send it out, because we run the risk of it being lost in the mail, or the colorist is tied up doing other work. Most people don't depend on coloring alone. So I've been doing all that stuff. I've drawn a couple covers, and in between I've done Spoof; one issue, but we're coming out with it again though, so keep watching. And Kull spasmodically.Which,because of my schedule, and because they weren't sure the sales were good, didn't come out except by itself in 1&2,then in some weird monster book, and then another monster book Now it's on it's own again. I don't know whether it's selling that fantastically, but they liked i t and they're getting a good response o n it from the fans. As I said, the fans don't sell the books, unfortunately.They are a strong part,and they are a good barometer because it is a large group of people. But remember, people who would like Dr Strange-be absolutely mad about

it- are not the people who would like Superman,or Daredevil,or something like that. And people who like Conan might not bother with Iron Man or Green Lantern. I don't know, and yet I've met some of them who like everything...like Millie the Model.

Dave: That's for the compleatest.
That's it, and where they put them all I'll never know. I have to throw out stuff Really, you can't keep it all. There's a lot of stuff I'd like to have that I've done; I'd have this beautiful thing that I've worked on in my house. What are you going to do, paper the walls? You need a warehouse. But that's beside the point. So now I'll be doing more art, more story telling. I probably will never ink my own stuff again, but that's okay, I'm not that great an inker. I'm not a inker, period. So I know how to tell a story, so they say. At least I haven't too mant complaints. I've been around long enough to know the subject material. I can usually grasp what the writter is talking about or we can come up with stuff in debate about the stories, which is healthy: it's exprience.So that's it;I'm changeing right now. Dave:Did you ever want to work for another company, is there another character you'd like to be?

Nope. Always do what I'm told.
Dave: you don't have any secret ambition of a character you'd like to be?
(in a funny voice)Always wanted to fly, always wanted to be invisible.(laughter from us) I like Kull,I must say. But I really like humor about the best, and than Kull. Kull is nice because my brother inks it and it looks good.He and I understand what we're aiming at. It's different; it's like Howard Pyle and those guys. It's just a thought back to our childhood,maybe,but it is fun to do because it's very flexible, and it's fantasy, and yet you are people who are a little more realistic. Like the horses smell. I mean they look like they really smell. But anyway, that's what I like.But if for resons they had to take me off Kull,I'd be a little disappointed, but it certainly wouldn't be the end of the world. As long as they don't cut my salary; that's all I'm worried about Not really worried-they're very good to me here. I've always worked where I chose to, and I've been here as long as anyplace, so I guess I think it's the best...even if Bill Gains is working over at National and I love him dearly.
Mark: Do you have a favorite character here?
Yes, Kull.
Mark: Besides Kull, like some of the old ones?
Oh, I think Spiderman is fantastic. And I think it's the best polished thing. Of course I love the Hulk, and I think the Thing is marvelous. I think the way he evolved with Stan and Kirby and the way Buscema has interpreted him is darl-ing. He's great. He's just this big pile of tiles, It's a perfect example on how to animate something and it's unrealistic looking and it's a real challenge to get that thing moving. It really is. The few times I've drawn it, whether it b in Spoof or Not Brand Echh or something, you're drawing a leg on a cover, and it has to be corrected. You have to think about how those tiles are moving. It's anatomy. But it's most like a moving thing of armor.

Mark: How did you like Steranko's work?
Fine; great; it's wild.He has a special quality that's not like a n y t h i n g that I can do,or anything I want to do. His personality is so different than mine, let's say, He comes on like that, & I have no desire to draw that kind of stuff. But it certainly is entertaining looking at it. My goodness, he gets a "wangingness" in his stuff that's beautiful. Really is. I think he's an asset to any company. His stuff is great. I don't know how well it sold, but he know's what he's doing.
Mark:Who do you think is the best all time artist?
No Comment. I can't say that (laughter)
Dave: Pick somebody dead so they can't get back at you.
Howard Pyle. No, really. If you look back at some of his children's books. That's all I'll say-Howard Pyle. I could say myself, or my brother, but I can't do that
Mark: How about Kirby?
He's the most fantastic, terrific, great, maevelous. I hope we get him back.
Mark: Why did he leave?

THE MERRY
MARVEL
MARCHING BAND

He was getting in a rut. We were not in a position then, I think, to put out, say 4 or 5 new characters. Now we are. But who could handle the Fantastic Four? We never even thought of it. We got along very well without him, which amazed us as much as it did National . We have a good staff here. Anyway, I think he was getting in a rut. After all, he was handling all those books, the same ones, for how many years?6,7, 8 years? About 8 years,was it? Sure, it must of been'60,'61 they started in.I'd think he would get tired of that, and his mind is so more advanced than anybody's in the field;a couple ofthousand years ahead of us. He just had t o branch out. But we couldn't at that time put out, say, the New Gods, or whatever he wanted to do at that time. So maybe that was it.I think I would be in a rut if I did Kull for 10 years and had to revolve it, unless it was syndicated, and it was a strip & a Sunday thing. But to do a book a month...you need diversification.At least I would I think. Although Shultz, I'm sure, is never going to get tired of Peanuts. He'll die before he'll spend all his money. He's good.

Mark: Do you like Kirby's books?

I don't understand most of it, but I like the looks of them. But he's so much more intelligent or whatever than me, that it's beyond me. Maybe the kids get it. Do you guys? Not that you're ki -ds, but to me..you probably are closer to th s new stuff that I am. What 'd o you feel?

Dave: It seems everybody has their own interpretation of it.

There is a lot of it that I can grasp, but the why and where-for and where its going, I don't know

Mark; Like the Funky Flashman thing.Did you hear about that?

Is that the take-off on Marvel?

Dave: Yeah, Stan & Roy.

Oh,that one, yeah. Well,you know, he'll get his. (laughter) No, I thought that was funny. It wasn't as funny as it could have been. Now if I had done it and had Kirby draw it, it would have been funny. I would have gotten fired, but it would have been funny. I don't think he went as far as he could have . There wasn't even enough satire in it.

Dave: It seemed more adapted for fans than anybody just reading in general: for someone picking up the book just to glance at it. They wouldn't have any idea who it was. But the hard core fans knew who it was the minute they saw it.

You can't make Stan out as a bad guy. They goy along for a awfully long time. I think it's a tease. That's all.

Dave: Many people interpreted it more.. ...as a blast?

Dave: Yeah.

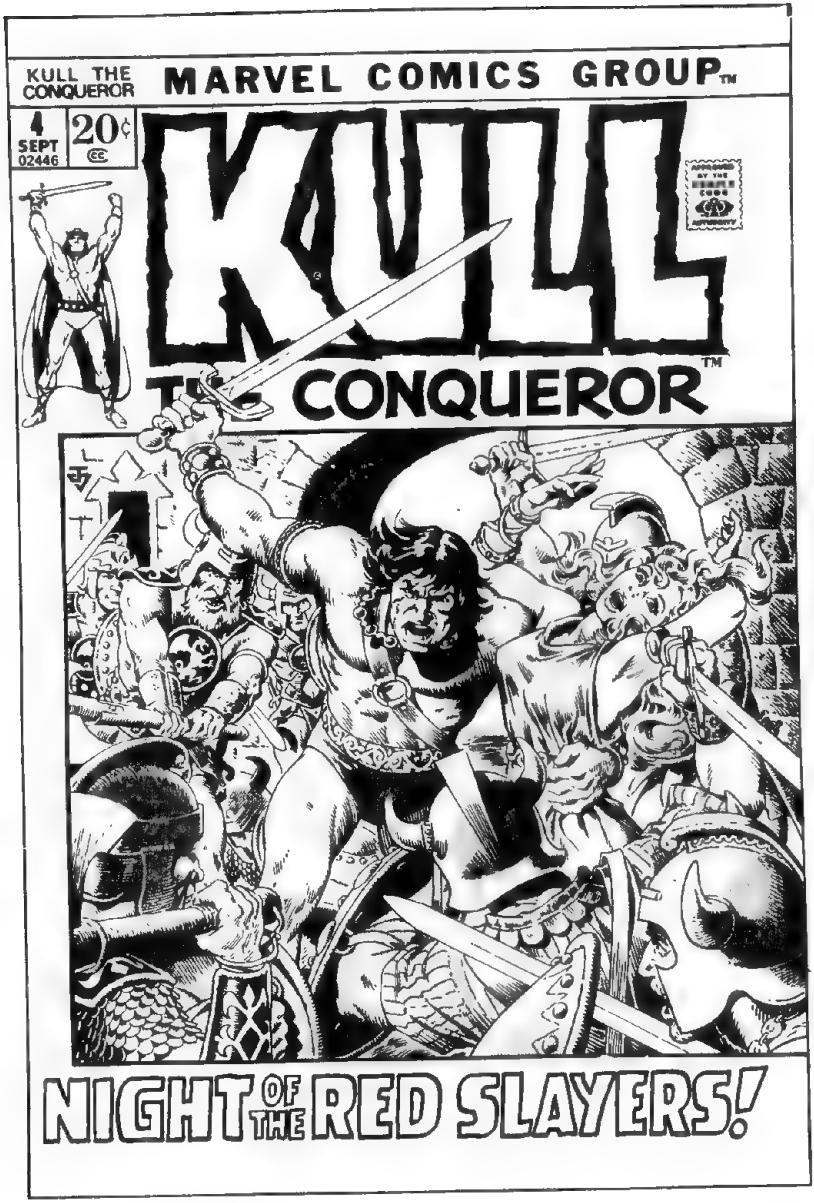
Stan is never petty. Stan, I think, got a charge out of it. The sincerest form of flattery is a take-off, right?

Mark: I feel, in the early 60's, they're what built comics back up.Like "The Lee and Kirby team",with the Fantastic Four and like that. Like the fan writer Tony Isabella said: "Even the books they didn't do together had a look to them.The Lee-Kirby look."

Definitely.

Dave: Seems like everyone draws in Kirby's style, in one way or another.

You take..everybody raves about EC,and I think those stories were marvelous. If you had one of those stories done by anybody in today's field,bet -ter by Marvel, of course.Sincerely a- bout that. I think the artists and wri -ters here inturpret things better. But I think you would have such an act -ton-filled thing that the code would have come in sooner with the material I think it was played down. I think Kirby introduced a movement and an act -ion and a dynamics into it that w e all could draw in 1960, but by 1965 we all were kicking people and fists were coming out into the reader's thing.All the guys in the cast would have knockouts of faces and things,but you didn't have "Whomp",and you didn't have the grotes- que distortion that caught the action . They may be draw absolutly cockeyed, but it gets the story across beautiful- ly. And once you see it done..the smart ones are the ones who don't copy him exactly,buy understand what he's trying to do and draw it their own way; That's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NIGHT OF THE RED SLAYERS!

the best way to interpret him. It comes out with the action. The blood and guts and the feeling of Kirby have influenced everybody, and the smart artists are the ones who can do it and draw that way and suddenly the stories had that fast moving pace.

Dave: Barry Smith did two issues of Avengers that looked a lot like Kirby's work

Well,sure.He was influenced by him; especially his super hero stuff. I think we all were. I mean,I never thought of drawing these figures until I saw what they wanted here, and that was Kirby. There's nothing to look down on.I think it's good if someone interprets someone well, and we've all been influenced by some of the old-times like Caniff. Magnificent stuff. Almost every inker has followed him, even Kirby. Kirby is unique unto himself. He could stand alone. But we all need good stories, so we need the writters too. Can't get alone without them.

Mark: Some think that Steranko started with Kirby-type artwork and then branched. To me his art looks half comic art & half sword & sorcery.

Yeah.I guess he's trrying to..maby he's not even conscious of it.Maby he's trying to reach that middle-medium.Anyway it certainly is startling, and executed very well for that type of style.

Dave: Maby that's where Talon comes in.

Yeah. Some people have the weirdest way of doing something, and yet it comes out. Look at Ditko. Everybody says,"Why did Ditko leave?" I don't know. I think he,too,was in a rut or something. And he never, unfortunately, never made anythink as good as Spider man. But here was a guy who drew., In some stories,nothing would be going on for 5 pages, but it had that funny look. People liked it, and there are still fan s that write in and ask,"Why isn't he doing stuff for us?". We would love to have him back; I know that. Thing is, it's a funny type of style. This guy, Mike Ploog, that's doing a great job on the Werewolf and the Ghost Rider. He has art with a funny look to it. Beautiful stuff; it's like Will Eisner.It's great. Johnny Romita is the best all around guy we have who can do anything you want: And he's the one who's been selling Spiderman. He's put out more books that Ditko did. You need those Weird styles. You get a weirdness of Streanko, you got Ditko and other analistics, you got the Wally Wood stuff with the lighting...Stan picked people like that. A guy like Johnny Romita who is more like Caniff, and these people with straight drawing-good drawing- everything is planned.The characters are polished to such an extent that you know them, and you can anticipate what they're going to say,practically in the next panal. This is good story telling. His books sell. Herb Trimpe is another great story teller. His stuff sometimes has a funny look to it. You get a bunch of people, with all varied styles and who have been all influenced, say, by Kirby, and you really got something going for yourself. If a lot of comics all look like Frazetta, you get pretty tired of it after a while. If they all look like Romita; if they all look like Ditko...you need variety because you're also into story telling. You get tired of the same one thing going. So that's what I think about Kirby's stuff, and the styling. And I think there's room enough in the industry for as many different styles as possible as long as they tell a story. Even stick figures ; What the heck? If you've got a gag, and your little stick figure has character to it, you can't go wrong.

Mark: Who do you like best for comic writing?

Best writer?

Yeah.

Geez,it depends on what subject matter. As far as this adventure stuff, I think Stan has proven himself. He revitalized the industry. I think Roy is fantastic. Roy is a walking encyclopedia on anything you want to know about comics. He also writes beautifully. From what I've seen of Denny O'Neil's stuff, I think he should be writing novels. All those guys -they have to be good to keep their head above water in this industry. Then wou have to solve- from day to day, hour to hour, how to save the world, the univers, your own life, the life of your family, your after life, and the people in the 5th and 4th and 18th dimensions. To choose one depends on what they're writing.I haven't seen Stan write sword and sorcery . I bet it would be fabulous. Thor is beautiful stuff. I can't say who's the best writer; it depends on the plot. It's like saying"Who's the best artist? Today,if you have an awfully good story and something a guy really likes...You could get a 18 year old kid in here and he might do a better job than any of us combined. I can't really say. I would

say who ever sells the best...That's a very good barometer: Art-wise and writing-wise and company-wise. Who's ever sales are up must be doing the right thing.

Dave: Well,Archie has tremendous sales.

...But it's a different field and it's great. I wish we had some of that stuff

Dave:Why do you think the field's switching back to more or less "Horror" stories like Werewolf by Night, and Tomb of Dracula?

I think it's selling. I think the super hero is slipping a little,or people are running out of ideas. And if you look around today, what is selling in the movies? Tales From the Crypt. They thought this was going to be a bomb and there are crowds of people going to see it. Little kids, they love these monster movies. They want to be frightened. Do you know what a joy it is to be frightened? People were getting bored. We have it so easy. We have TV and all this stuff. So they wanted something different, and there's a whole generation that hasn't been frightened.A really good monster story,like the old day Dracula stuff...the original Dracula-Frankenstine movies. They could run them a million times and still make money.

Dave: They are running them a million times and they are making money.

Yeah, they'll never wear out. Good night Stan, Are you the last one?

Stan Lee: No, you're the last one.

But you're the one that matters(laughter)

Dave: The man himself.

Oh, you mean Stan? Oh. Sorry I couldn't introduce you. (He was moving pretty fast)

Mark: Who did this drawing here?

That's a lady that corresponds with us. She did a romance story. She loves Marvel Comics. She's a married lady with a couple of kids I think.

Dave: She may very well be the one that wrote the letter. (Something we had been discussing before the interview) A girl wrote a letter to one of the fanzimas...which one was it?

Mark:Comic Fandom Monthly.

Dave:...CFM, stating how she loved the-Vision.

That's her. She's in love with the Vision. That's her.

Mark:I thought that was the same stuff.

She was down here, Stan gave her a job. He didn't think she was ready for super here stuff. She's got the idea of the stuff,but her technique isn't perfected. But she's good, she's very imaginative, and she's a girl, and Stan said "There ought to be more ladies around." So he gave her a romance job. So who knows?

Mark: Did you go the Carnegie Hall thing?

Oh yes. (laughter from her)

Mark: What did you think of it?

Same thing you did. (more laughter from her) It wasn't on comics. What there was on comics was fantastic; the bit with the drawing and stuff. But that guy with his fairy dust running around the stage and that nonsence...the music was fine if it was a musical concert, but it had nothing to do with comics. And people were sitting there waiting for more artwork. When Herb Trimpe and Beucema and John Romita were up there drawing you could have heard a pin drop in that whole thing. But the rest of the time, people were talking about going home, parents were getting absolutly itchey because the kids were saying "Where's Stan? Where's Stan?" My ears were assulted, my mind was assulted, my personal opinion is it was a compleat wast of time. But, if it got any publicity as far as the news papers....Any time Marvel comics is givin a boost, fine. I think if they had left Stan alone and let him have all artwork if he had time to produce it himself, fine. It was a advertizing piece,unfortunetly it was too much of the other stuff. Unnecessary.

Dave: I like to boost comics when ever

I can,because too many people keep put-timg them down.

Gotta leave soon.My god! It's 6 O'clock hurry up!

Mark: I gotta take pictures of t h e place. Last time I was here I forgot

Okay, let's do that...

"End"

The Comix Media

By Steve Jenkins

To what extremes is the comix media flowing? From the funny papers to the comic book, then to higher, more sophisticated mediums of the movies and television. To be found in almost all literature. From pree-school to college notes and last to our own fannish reading paraphanlia; the fanzine. But putting aside the varicose vein of literature in which they are to be found, the comix themselves are changing. As times change continually so are the comix--and so the four decade old, four color process is now going through some different variations.

A comic book which a little over ten years ago would have cost you a dime now runs just under two bits to a biteing fifty cents. Not that the fifty cent price is so unbearable to tackle for the average collector, but to those who seek out at their neighborhood dealer many titles may find his pocket running a little low each month. In the twenty-six year period of 1935-61 small items happend in the comix but not unfortunatly always for the better. We saw pages slowly but surely fading away with each passing year. From a wide total of 64 pages for your ten pennies you soon only picked up a book exact-ly half the size. But, that as it turned out was progress.

In 1962 inflation began, still 12 cents was a bare minimum and you still got those action packed issues each month of the start-ing new trend; the super-hero. The super-he-ro had gone through a dark age and now that he was being revived the extra few pennies a month didn't bother you that much. But as the years passed and the artist and the writ-er seemingly got more talented the pages be-gan to dwindle once again. In 1969 you got the first taste of the fifteen cent book. It was the same, only the price was different. As had been explained with the twelve cent book the editor gave assured reason why comparing the cost of living with this new age as with a shory seven years ago.

Only the editors failed to mention how the dime book lasted a bit over a quarter of a century and the tweleve cent item didn't last a decade. But they did mention how greateful they were that you bought the book in any case and went on with the prices of frankfuters and ice cream sodas and how paper is so expensive. Not two years into the seventies and once again we have tasted the bitter bite of inflation. Comix are up in various stages of twenty through fifty cents. The fifty cent items are being brought out at the moment by National and they are for one thing, unpleasent. 100 full pages of absolutly nothing but reprints. In their favor though I might add, that they have some exceedingly fine wrap-around covers. I tend to imagine that some of the editors of those horrendous slick fanzines are now working for them though I know otherwise.

But aside from these hudge reprint annuals just what major advances towards a future comix industry have there been made? It seems as though a step into the future is usually taking a step bachwards in the comix industry. We start at the beginning with the colorful costumed super-heroes, and then Bill Gaines comes along with his nostalgic piece of the craft and horror. Soon the fly by night companies help put an end to it and the merry marchers take up where they left off. Now it seems as though the horror is in and only the favorite all time super heros are making it. But although the market is flowing with both and all different types of other trend making items just where is it all leading too? Neal Adams said in his keynote speech at the July comicon a few years back that he feels the medium isn't going anywhere just yet and that at its present rete it will not survive. Will it? Or will it fall like all nostalgia of the past? In the same speech Neal also spoke of his thoughts on the slick four-color comic that would

But rather than go into a rehash of a rehash, the success of the Warren book which led to two smi-liar Warren successes (Eerie, Vam-pirella), let us go right into the present and near future. Skywald publications tried unsuccessfully to catch the Warren audience but anoth-er publisher tried a different for-mat and started perhaps the finest item related to the comix field now on the stands. The publisher was Larry Brill and the Magazine was the Monster Times.

The Monster times, published twice monthly features articles, newsitems, and stills from hundreds of old horror, science- fiction and fantasy films and also featured are book reviews and movie reviews related to this sort of paraphanlia. This book, a fifty cent item, carries thrity-two full tabloid pages including color cover and many extras. If this is the beginning of a new age for comix then up, up and away.

go for a dollar. This idea I feel has been best presented to the case of the comix medium as a whole.

The comix may keep on teaching to those too young to read in years to come in a format such as this. But a format needs a leader as always. Back in 1964 one such leader did so but he didn't use the four color process in his book. The book was Creepy and the publisher was James Warren. Warren, who along with Forest J. Ackerman, gave us adult material of horror in Famous Monsters of Filmland. Warren took the horror line and the comix format .o f pen and ink combined them in a black and white slick book. To produce one of the finer things since the Entertainment Comix group produced 3-D comix. Warren also managed to pick up some of the most creative artist and writers in the field. Such as Archie Goodwin, a sort of post-E.C. era author. They combined the magic of Frazetta, Williamson, Torres, Crandal and many others to numerous to mention to bring out a really fine masterpiece. Many of these artists had in fact worked for the Entertainment Comix group.

(C) Larry Ivie

The last hurrah

Opinion, by Joe Brancatelli
Managing Editor,
THE MONSTER TIMES

It seems as if I've been reading comic books for a hundred years. And it seems as if people have been professing to the death of the American comic book for almost as long. The prophets-of-doom, however, finally seem to be very near the thruth. If my hundred and first year of comic book reading ever comes to pass, it is certainly coming as comic book's last hurrah.

A strange pall has fallen over the comic book scene. There's no word to accurately describe the sensation. It's something more-something akin to the plague--a slow, hideous disease affecting the readers, the writers, the artists, and even the business people.

I can afford the luxury of simply being an observer. Despite my long years of comic book reading. I've never once seriously thought of writing for comic books. For that reason, I can look at comic books, see them dying and not have to worry about next month's rent. For many of my life-long friends, it won't be quite so simple. Unlike myself, their one burning desire has been to work for comic books. Many have made it, some others are on the fringe--the lucky ones coul-n't or wouldn't hack it. whatever our financial position is, however, we're all suffering. We're all dying a little. All of us are watching a once vibrant industry suffer its final heaves. Ten years from now, one of us will be writing a latter-day "American Pie" for the comic books. Its not an assignment any of us savor.

The paramount question, I suppose, then becomes: Who is to blame? Do we lay the mantle of responsibility on the major publishers? They may be certainly responsible in part, but not solely. The men who occupy the publisher's seats have spent their whole lives as living examples of "The Peter Principle." Theirs is not to reason why.

Next on the list are the editors. Do we organize lynching parties to mete out justic to all of comic book's editors? Should our wrath be laid upon them? I think not. We could then go further on down the line looking vainly for the buck to stop: the writers, the artists, the colorists, the production people, the business people. Haze them all, but I doubt a satisfactory scapegoat would be found.

The basic reason for comic's deline is not so much the people. Rather, it's their mass short-sightedness. And by their own intransigence. Those in the comic industry who aren't short-sighted and/or intransigent are also no longer in the field. They saw the writing on the wall long ago.

Look at a comic book of 20 or 30 years ago. For all intensive purposes, nothing has changed. The price has doubled, the page count has slimmed and the writing and art styles have been

modified slightly. Otherwise, a comic book produced in 1950 could be produced almost identically in 1972. In fact, a large portion of today's comic titles are just that --1950 comic books reprinted at a higher price and lower page count. Comic people have been so shory-sighted and unmoving that their goods haven't been altered signifcantly since its inception. Not only is this intransigente absurb, it's also sound -ing comic book's death knell.

Twenty years ago, Richard M. Nixon was a vociferous anti-Communist Vice-President. Today, he's a "statesman"-President, journeying to such Communist strongholds as China and the Soviet Union. Twenty years ago, Hubert Humphrey was a fuzzy—thinking senator from Minnesota. Today, he's still a fuzzy thinker and Minnesota senator, but he's paid the price. He's a three time loser for President. Only those who have changed have succeeded. Sports is a good example.

Twenty years ago, baseball was played with eight teams. Football utilized eight, as did basketball, and hockey used six. Today, to meet the demand of profits and spectator interest, baseball is organised into 24 teams, football has 26, basketball 27, and hockey has expanded to 28. Twenty years ago, comics were four color magazines on pulp stock with juvenile themes and less-than-honorable reputations. Today, comics are still four-color magazines with pulp stock, contain the very same juvenile themes, and carry the same stigmas.

About the only things that have changed in comics are the relative values: a comic is more expensive, you get less material for your money, and they are not nearly as profitable--esthetically of financially. Somewhere, "Americas' Four Color Pasttime' has drifted frome the mainstream. Television, the comics code and genaral economic pressures on all magazines have been strong factors. But comic's greatest sin remains their own inability to change with the times, bend with the trends and do what has never been done.

And, in their enlightened ignorance, the comic book moguls still refuse to yield to the changing times. Rather that move forward, quickly, and experiment with new ideas, new formats and new situations, they have chosen to return to the past. To take shelter in the land of what once was. Back to "the good old days," the days of high profit and high adventure. National comics has added two supposedly important d--itions to their 1973 line--Captain Marvel and The Shadow, Marvel has re-intro—duce Doc Savage. To refresh dormant memories, all these "new" characters made their original appearences over 30 years ago.

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Captain Marvel was a wonder in his time He was a shy introvert in his secret identity. As THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL, he was incredibly naive. inane and generally wit-less.

But he was fun to the kids in the forties. He was fun because Captain Marvel was like them--shy and naive. And they thought it would be great if only they could yell SHAZAM and become superpowerful. They also had something else in common with the Captain--they both became incredibly shy around girls, those funny looking kids with long hair. The ones who bruised easily.

But that was twenty years ago. Somehow the sight of a kid yelling Shazam and becoming a specially endowed--but strangly naive--human doesn't wash today. Not when on the Seven O' Clock News, right after the cartoons, he can watch some one get his guts blown out by a hand grenade. It simply won't wash when that kid can watch a house, a rice field and even real people being burned by napalm. Somehow it takes the aura away from being THE WORLD'S MIGHT-IEST MORTAL. Somehow the kids know that it isn't real--or even fun--anymore. The good Captain belonged to another era, a much simplier one. A time when spearing a

Their salesman, let's call him Harry, was making close to $100,000 a year. Just by selling these fine, traditional shoes. He extolled his company's excellent shoes, their fine workmanship. Their thaditonal styling. Several years later, when shoe stylining began to change radically, and workmanship and tradition stopped meaning a hell of a lot, Harry and his company, when they nolonger could remain intransigent, their styles got more conservative, and even more traditional. And when Harry took his line to show the shoe stores, no one bought them, because they were out of style. No one cared how traditional they were.

Harry's company went out of business soon after that. Locked up shop--traditional styling and all-- and started merchandising men's dinner jackets. Harry, unable to catch on with any of the high-fashioned shoe companies, took a job in a uptown shoe store for $175 a week. The last time I saw him, only a few months ago, he was sitting on his squat fitting stool still extolling the virtues of his old company.

Somehow, not too many years in the future, I can see all of comic book's Stans and Carmines and Roys on a fitting stool in an uptown shoe store--shouting comic's last hurrahs. And they'll be as painful then as they are now.

few Krauts was okay. An era when punching out a buck-toothed Nip seemed perfectly delightful--even wildly patriotic. Captain Marvel is a product of the forties, and he's going to die on the newsstands in the seventies. Today's kids are too sophisticated for Captain Marvel. Maybe its about time.

But strangely, I don't think the comoc people realize that. To them, Captain Marvel is a return to the big time--the time of 2.5 million copies every two weeks, the time of unbridled profits. And maybe they'll bring back World War Two and the paper drives if that'll help sales some.

In the end, the return to comic book's past, coupled with comic book's general resistance to necessary change, will doom comic books as we know it. And there's a strange anology that goes with it.

When I was just a kid, around my fiftieth year of comic reading, I helped out in my father's shoestore. He used to carry a line of shoes famed for quality--and workmanship. Not to mention tradition.

Now you know why these heros are angry (ED.)

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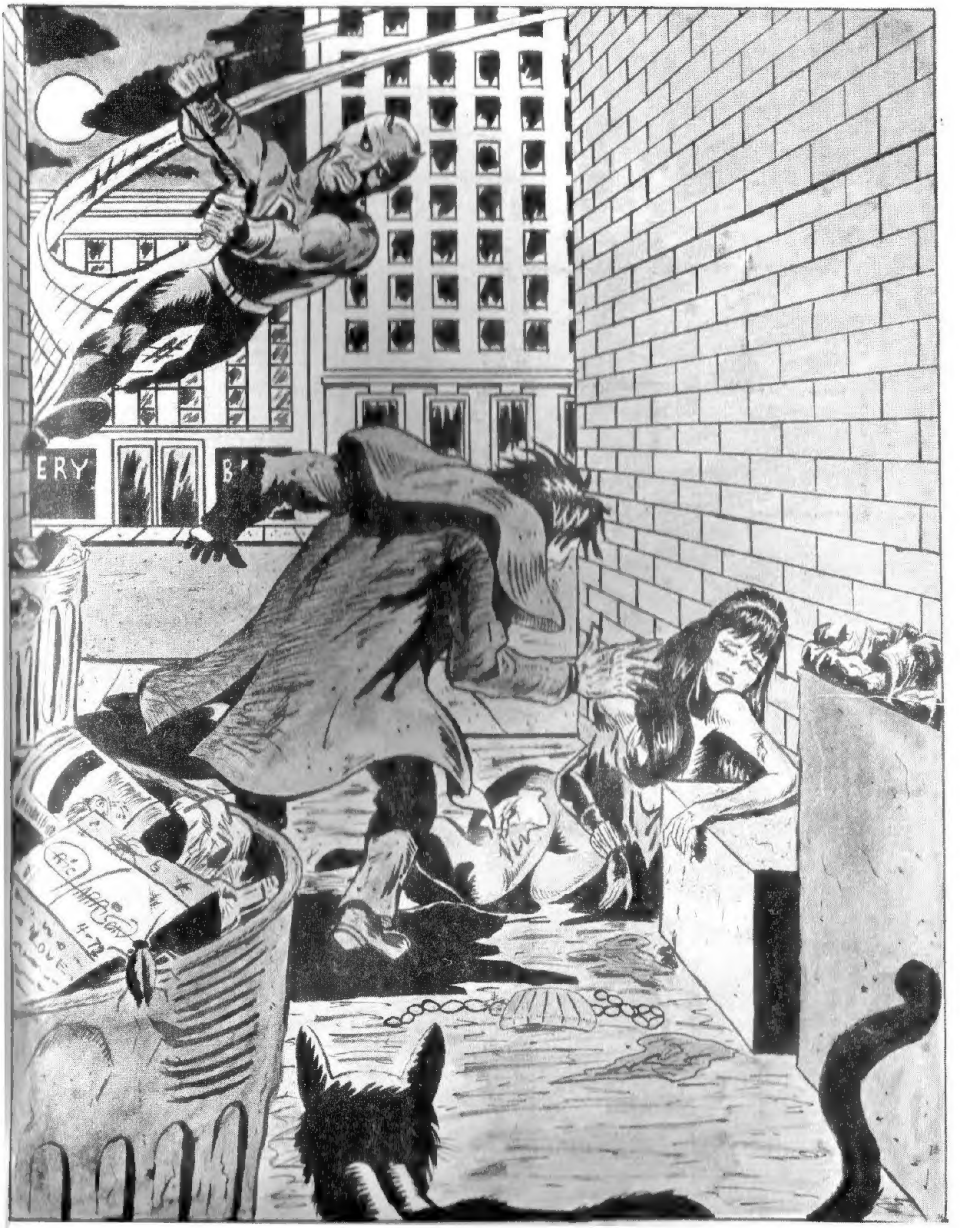
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THROUGH THE WALL, BABY!

FUJITAKE
'72